

SECRET

ROUTING

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FROM WEST COAST SECUR OFFICE

1. FOLLOWING ARTICLE TAKEN FROM LOS ANGELES TIMES 8 JAN 67.
 "SECRET JET'S WRECKAGE AND BODY OF PILOT FOUND - CANOGA
 PARK CIVILIAN IS VICTIM IN CRASH OF 2,000-M.P.H. CRAFT

THE WRECKAGE OF AN EXPERIMENTAL TRIPLESONIC RECONNAISSANCE
 JET FROM EDWARDS AIR FORCE BASE WAS LOCATED NEAR AN ABANDONED TOWN
 IN NEVADA, AND THE BODY OF ITS CIVILIAN PILOT WAS FOUND 12 MILES
 AWAY, THE AIR FORCE REPORTED SATURDAY.

THE BODY OF WALTER L. RAY, 33, OF 7900 FARRALONE ST., CANOGA
 PARK, WAS SIGHTED BY A SEARCH AIRCRAFT IN DESOLATE COUNTRY EAST OF
 LEITH SATURDAY.

IT WAS FOUR MILES SOUTHEAST OF THE FORMER RAILROAD SECTION
 TOWN THAT SEARCHERS FRIDAY SAW THE WRECKAGE OF THE JAVELIN-SHAPED
 SR-71, FASTEST OPERATIONAL AIRCRAFT IN THE WORLD. IT HAD BEEN MISSING
 SINCE THURSDAY AFTERNOON.



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AFTER DISCOVERY OF THE PLANE NEAR LEITH, 90 MILES NORTHEAST OF LAS VEGAS, AN INTENSIVE AIR AND GROUND SEARCH WAS BEGUN FOR THE PILOT.

GROUND TEAM REACHES SCENE

THE BODY OF RAY, A TEST PILOT FOR LOCKHEED AIRCRAFT CORP., WHICH MADE THE PLANE, WAS SEEN FROM THE AIR LATE SATURDAY. A GROUND RESCUE TEAM REACHED THE SCENE SHORTLY AFTERWARD.

THE AIR FORCE SAID THE SPECIFIC CAUSE OF DEATH WAS NOT DETERMINED. IT DECLINED TO SAY WHETHER THE PILOT HAD EJECTED.

RAY LEAVES HIS WIFE, DIANE CAROLE; HIS MOTHER, MRS. THELMA AMELIA RAY, HAVANA, ILL.; A BROTHER, VERNON O. RAY, ORANGE; AND A SISTER, ELMORE CEALKA, ELKHART, IND.

SPOKESMEN AT EDWARDS DECLINED TO SAY WHY DISCOVERY OF THE WRECKAGE WAS NOT REVEALED UNTIL SATURDAY.

AN AIR FORCE TEAM OF INVESTIGATORS HAS BEEN DISPATCHED TO CONDUCT AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE CAUSE OF THE CRASH.

THE HIGHLY SECRET 2,000-M.P.H. PLANE, POWERED BY TWO HUGE JET ENGINES, WAS DESCRIBED BY PRESIDENT JOHNSON IN 1964 AS THE MOST ADVANCED IN THE WORLD, AND CAPABLE OF SPEEDS MORE THAN THREE TIMES THAT OF SOUND AND ALTITUDES OF MORE THAN 80,000 FEET.

SECRECY HAS SURROUNDED THE CAMERA-CARRYING AIRCRAFT WHICH IS NOT ALLOWED TO BE PHOTOGRAPHED AT CLOSE RANGE. THE 100-FOOT-LONG, JET BLACK PLANE IS WIDELY CONSIDERED A SUPER SPY PLANE SUCCESSOR TO THE U-2 TYPE RECONNAISSANCE PLANE IN WHICH AMERICAN FRANCIS GARY POWERS WAS

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SHOT DOWN OVER RUSSIA IN 1960.

ONE OTHER SR-71 CRASHED BUT WAS NOT DESTROYED LAST FEBRUARY. ITS TWO LOCKHEED CREWMEN EJECTED OVER NEW MEXICO AND THE CRAFT REPORTEDLY LANDED ALMOST INTACT, HITTING SOFT EARTH IN VIRTUALLY LEVEL FLIGHT. ONE TEST PILOT WAS KILLED AND THE OTHER SURVIVED.

THE SR-71 INCORPORATES A DOUBLE-DELTA WING DESIGN. THE SLIM FORWARD TRIANGLE OF THE WING EXTENDS TO THE TIP OF THE NOSE SECTION TO GIVE THE FUSELAGE BOAT-LIKE APPEARANCE FROM THE FRONT.

AN EDWARDS SPOKESMAN SAID RAY HAD SUFFICIENT FUEL FOR ONLY 90 MINUTES OF FLIGHT IN THE SR-71 AFTER THE PLANE WAS LAST REPORTED THURSDAY."

2. FOLLOWING ARTICLE FROM LOS ANGELES HERALD EXAMINER 8 JAN 67.

"BODY OF SPY PLANE PILOT FOUND BY AF - EDWARDS AIRFORCE BASE, CALIF., JAN. 7 (AP) -

SEARCHERS FOUND THE BODY TONIGHT OF WALTER L. RAY, CIVILIAN PILOT OF THE EXPERIMENTAL SR-71 JET WHICH CRASHED THURSDAY IN NEVADA, THE AIR FORCE SAID.

THE BODY OF RAY, 33, OF CANOGA PARK, CALIF., WAS SPOTTED BY A SEARCH AIRCRAFT 10 MILES EAST OF THE CRASH SITE NEAR NEITH, NEV., ABOUT 73 MILES NORTHEAST OF LAS VEGAS.

A GROUND RESCUE TEAM REACHED THE BODY SHORTLY THEREAFTER, THE AIR FORCE SAID.

RAY WAS TESTING THE TRIPLESonic, JAVELIN-LIKE PLANE, BUILT

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BY LOCKHEED AIRCRAFT CORP. OF BURBANK, CALIF., AT THE TIME OF THE
CRASH.

RAY IS SURVIVED BY HIS WIDOW, DIANE CAROLE; HIS MOTHER, THELMA
AMELIA RAY, OF HAVANA, ILL.; A SISTER, ELMORA CEALKA, OF ELKHART,
IND., AND A BROTHER, VERNON O. RAY, OF ORANGE, CALIF."

3. NO PUBLICITY APPEARED IN THE LOS ANGELES TIMES - 09 JAN.

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